1: Métraux E-4 (no date) 1946 SM3 Caingang SM3

between the Taquarí and Cahy Rivers. Today their settlements lie between Inhacorá (Nucorá) (long. 54°15′ W.) and Lagoa Vermelha (long. 51°30′ W.).

The Caingang of Misiones, Argentina.—At the end of the 19th century about 60 *Caingang* lived in the Argentine Territory of Misiones on the eastern slopes of the Sierra Central, 3 miles (5 km.) from the town of San Pedro, near the Yabotí River. According to Ambrosetti (1895, p. 307), these Indians, who were known in the region as *Tupí*, had come from Palmas or Rio Grande by crossing the upper Uruguay River. A few years later (1902), some of them returned to Brazil.

Literature on the Caingang.—Few data on the *Caingang* can be gleaned from the Colonial literature. Though the *Caingang* are often mentioned in the Jesuit texts on the Paraguayan missions, Lozano (1873–74, 1:418–427) and Azara (1904, pp. 402–407) are the only authors who give short, but fairly accurate, descriptions of these Indians. The accounts of Father Luiz de Cemitille and of Telemaco Morocines Borba were for many years our best sources. Later, L. B. Horta Barbosa (1913) published very exact observations on their customs, which were supplemented by Manizer (1930). Ambrosetti (1895) has written an interesting article on the *Caingang* of San Pedro, in Misiones. The social organization and funerary rites of the *Caingang* were the subject of a special monograph by Baldus (1937 c). Henry (1941) studied the decadent remnants of the *Aweikoma* group and described their culture in psychological terms. Their language is known mainly through an excellent dictionary by Father Mansueto Barcatta de Valfloriana (1918, 1920) and a linguistic analysis by Jules Henry (1935). Ploetz and Métraux (1930) have attempted to bring together most of the data about the *Caingang* contained in the literature up to 1928.

CULTURE

SUBSISTENCE ACTIVITIES

Farming.—The only *Caingang* who subsisted entirely by hunting and collecting were those of the State of Santa Catarina, the so-called *Botocudo or Aweikoma*. These Indians, however, remembered a time when they, like all other *Caingang* groups, practiced agriculture.

The ancient *Guayaná*, ancestors of the modern *Caingang*, are described as relatively sedentary agriculturists, though our sources stress the importance of hunting in their economy. This was also true for the *Caingang* at the end of the 19th century. All their groups raised maize (red, white, and violet varieties), pumpkins, and beans (a white variety), but perhaps depended less than their *Guaraní* neighbors on these crops. Like many Indians who had become acquainted with farming in recent times through the intermediary of

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some other tribe, the ancient *Caingang* were improvident and consumed their crops as they matured, storing none for the lean months ahead. On the other hand, Horta Barboza (1913, p. 34) states that maize was as important to them as "wheat for the Europeans." The *Caingang* of the region of San Pedro (Misiones), observed by Ambrosetti (1895, p. 337), opened their clearings in tracts covered with bamboo or sparse bush. They broke the small trees with cudgels or by hand. When the dead trees were dry, they burned them and waited until the beginning of the rainy season for sowing. Women planted crops with digging sticks; they also harvested the crops and carried them home. Men do all the farming in the reservation of Palmas.

In modern groups the tiller of a field is recognized as its exclusive owner; if he dies before harvest, the seedlings are destroyed.

Collecting.—When the *Caingang* were still living in their aboriginal condition, pine nuts of *Araucaria angustifolia*, a tree which has a distribution coinciding more or less with that of the tribe, was fundamental to the native diet. From April to June the Indians gathered in the forests to climb the trees and knock down the ripened fruits, which the women helped to pick up. The climbing technique—also used in getting honey or in robbing birds' nests—was to pass one noose around the feet, another around the tree and the climber's back, and alternately move the two bands up the trunk. The *Aweikoma-Caingang* used only a noose of bamboo strips.

The *Caingang* also collected wild tubers (*Dioscorea* sp.) and a great many wild fruits, such as jaboticaba (*Myrciaria* sp.), pitanga (Myrtaceae sp.), articú (*Annona montana*), pineapples, papaya (*Carica papaya*), caraguatá (*Bromelia* sp.), etc. The starchy pith of the pindo palm (*Cocos romanzoffiana*) was formerly an important food item, but today has been supplanted by manioc flour.

Honey and the larvae of bees and especially the larvae of the tambú beetle, which abound in decayed palm and bamboo trunks, are prized delicacies. It is also reported in some sources that the ancient *Caingang* did not despise snakes or lizards.

Hunting.—The *Caingang* spend a large portion of their time hunting alone or in small parties. The dog, treated by some groups as an indispensable auxiliary, is a recent acquisition. Some *Caingang* groups lacked it as late as 1912. To develop the smelling powers of their dogs, the Indians expose them to the smoke of the burnt skin of the game which they are to stalk. They never give them the bones of game animals to gnaw, taking great precaution lest the game be offended.

An entire band participates in a peccary hunt. Old and young, preceded by dogs, endeavor to drive the animals toward hunters, who shoot them with arrows. The *Aweikoma-Caingang* follow droves

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for example, tapir. A large pit is dug in the ground and lined with stones. A fire is built within the hole until the stones are glowing. The ashes and embers are then removed, the stones are covered with leaves, and the meat, carefully wrapped, is placed inside and buried under a thick layer of soil. Twelve hours later the meat is taken out, perfectly cooked. Fish are broiled on a babracot, then stored on an indoor platform. 252

Women pound maize with heavy wooden pestles in cylindrical wooden mortars, which are sometimes large enough to accommodate three workers at a time and too heavy to be moved (fig. 58, *d*). They also have smaller mortars with which they use stone pestles. Maize flour is prepared as mush or is kneaded into dough and baked in ashes. Maize kernels are often soaked in water to the point of rotting, mashed, kneaded into loaves with saliva added, and roasted in ashes.

The pith of pindo palms is crushed in a mortar, sifted, and roasted in a pan, just as with manioc flour.

Soup is made from husked, chewed, soaked, and pounded pine nuts. They are also roasted in the shell on the embers; pine-nut dough may also be kneaded into small loaves and baked in the ashes. Piñons are [251] preserved in tightly closed baskets soaked in water for a month and a half. In the past salt was unknown; tart malagüeta berries (*Capsicum frutescens*) were used instead. [263]

To stir the fire or lift food to and from it, the *Caingang* use a curved withe (Manizer, 1930, pp. 772, 774; Henry, 1941, pl. 2, *f*).

HOUSES

Lozano (1873, 1:424) describes the *Caingang* or *Guayaná* hut as follows: 342

> They stick in the ground a long forked pole against which they lean crosswise four other poles. In this way they make four divisions covered with palm leaves. In each division lives a family with the children. Each compartment communicates with the other by small doors. In each community there are five or six such huts placed at convenient distance from each other so that everyone can hunt and fish.

This type of house has entirely disappeared among modern *Caingang*, but a few years ago the *Aweikoma* remembered it as the house of the open savannas and were able to reconstruct one (Henry, 1941, p. 166).

The more recent *Caingang* dwelling was a lean-to (fig. 56), which often was made into a gable-roofed hut when two structures of this type were joined. The *Aweikoma-Caingang* live either in an arched lean-to which is open on three sides or in a hut composed of two such units, the arches being made to descend to the ground at both ends (Henry, 1941,

wrapped in each other's arms, lie under a couple of blankets. Children sleep almost anywhere that they can crawl under a blanket, and any solitary sleeper welcomes warm flesh that will help to shelter him against the cold. If children were not welcome sleeping companions it would go hard with them in families where scarcity of blankets would leave them absolutely unprotected.

The Kaingáng are hungry in winter and early spring. Then the tracks of animals are hard to interpret and the tapir can run far and fast, for it is no longer burdened with its young and the forest is cool. To the Kaingáng the tapir is not only the most important food, it is the very symbol of food. When they have no tapir meat there is very little meat of any kind, for the tapir is most plentiful when the wild fruits and nuts are ripe, and when these are gone the monkeys and birds, the rodents and pigs, the deer and the tapir that have fed on them for months, grow scarce or vanish altogether. Many primitive people who are faced with this seasonal scarcity have developed some technique of preservation, but not so the Kaingáng. They preserve only pine nuts and have nothing to support them in these times of hunger.

Summer, with its warmth, its dryness, and its plenty, brings comfort at last to these people who sew no skins and make no warm clothes against the winter, who have no knowledge of boats or rafts to carry them across the rivers that lie everywhere around them, and who, in a hungry land, preserve no food and make no traps. If necessity were the mother of invention the Kaingáng would have all these things, which would make their life easier. If people systematically adapted themselves to their environment the Kaingáng would not only be dogged and skillful hunters, but they would have the traps and the fishing techniques which they completely lack. The men would not only be untiring, uncomplaining providers, but they would have discovered how to preserve the food they obtain with so much effort, so that in the lean days of winter they would not grow weak and retch and vomit with hunger.

The Kaingáng are powerful and of tough physique.[1] The arms and legs of the full-grown men are thick and muscular, and the women, although shorter and less conspicuously muscular, are strong enough to carry heavy loads. Their hair is straight and black, their dark-brown eyes wide and level, their noses high-bridged and coarse, their lips thick. Their skin color ranges from a deep brown to a golden tan. Sometimes a sick person who has lain a long time by the fire, away from the sun, may be practically white. The men, who are about as tall as the average white European, are graceful in spite of their massiveness. It is a pleasure to see them walk—the tangled forest has never let them learn to run—with their high springing

[1] They have very bad teeth.

852 enormous fire is built in the middle of the circle, and the warriors begin their chanting very early in the morning. At dawn they adorn themselves with all their warrior's badges and perform certain movements in unison around the fire.

[535] Then the women make their entrance, with rattles in both hands; singing, they begin to dance with the warriors. This dance consists of a rhythmic stepping to the regular muffled beat of spears upon the ground and the rattling of gourds.

852 After several hours of continuous dancing, and only then, the 273 troughs are opened and the drinking begins.

The men drink immoderately, as do the women, and the children to be baptized are forced to take some of the liquid. They are revolted by it and refuse to drink it, but the warriors force them to swallow until the children are completely dazed.

When nearly senseless, they are shaken in every conceivable manner by their fathers and relatives to stun them even more. This is done brutally, the children being held by the legs and flung through the air from one man to another until they become totally insensible.

304 The Indians finally proceed to perforate the lips of the 852 neophytes. This is done with a special awl made of very hard wood and hardened further by means of fire.

As soon as the performation is made, a small labret [Portuguese botoque, hence Botocudo, "labretted."--Translator] ngrókozũdma, is inserted through it; as the child grows, this is gradually exchanged for a thicker one in order to enlarge the hole.

[563] Female children are not endowed with lip plugs, but with two incisions made with the same instrument just below the kneecap.

Once these operations have been performed, the warriors resume drinking even more immoderately and go back to their dancing. Later, various games are played.

All the various groups of the Botocudo tribe get together for these important celebrations, which can only be carried out in the presence of all the warriors and never separately.

526 The groups break up along lines of kinship and interests to match their strength and skill in various games.

Ngréda is one of their most interesting games. It consists in catching or parrying a round stone enclosed in a bag of finely woven embira fiber.

2: Henry E-5 (1932-1934) 1941
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Aweikoma

in the middle of the night and finds himself without food may, if he is brazen enough, get up, and while the owner is asleep, eat the leg of his howler monkey or the rib of his tapir. He must keep his tongue between his teeth, for to refuse food is the most frightful sin the Kaingáng can imagine. *Ndegn*, to refuse, has such an aura of destructive affect about it that every time I heard it it chilled my blood. To hear *ndegn* applied to food is to expect murder around the corner. In times of plenty it does not matter how much meat a man has; in times of hunger food passes through his fingers like water. Still, with all this each of the Kaingáng likes to take the biggest piece even when game is scarce. For one or two days the bellies of his children will be full, but soon the meat is all gone.

This possessive feeling about food applies with somewhat greater intensity to pine nuts. These are often gathered by a man and his wife. He climbs the tree and jumps around on the boughs until he dislodges the great five-pound cones; and then he descends and helps his wife gather them up and break them open to extract the nuts. They fill their yard-deep baskets, and what they cannot use immediately they bury in stream beds to preserve them. The theft of a full unburied basket is rare—I know of only one case—but the theft of nuts from the preservation beds is quite common. The nonchalance of the Kaingáng about these thefts is perplexing to the ethnologist steeped in the traditions of western culture and trained to expect conflicts after theft. Nevertheless I never knew the theft of a basket of nuts to create more than a one-day grumble. Indians would protest to me about property people had stolen, and they would tell me in no uncertain language what they thought of such people, but they never did anything about it. It is not possible to formulate precisely the movements of food in Kaingáng society. When one has said that the primary emphasis is on giving to affinal relatives, to parents and siblings, to hunting companions, and to the friends whom one has inherited from one's father, everything has been said that can be about the structuralization of food distribution.

Kaingáng property arrangements are not a matter of checks and balances which ensure that for every piece of meat which A gives to B he may expect a piece in return. It is impossible to make them understand any theory of exchange other than that of outright purchase which they have learnt from the whites. I tried in vain to make them understand that when I lent them a scythe to clear their fields they should give me a little corn when it became green. Their understanding of reciprocity is in terms of lifelong symbiosis, not in terms of balanced exchanges. No accounts are kept, but in the back of his mind each man knows who has been systematically helpful to him and who not. Many of the conflicts within the extended families arise out of some failure to live up to the ideal of constant

222 raising their feet while their body rests against the cord. [121] In
481 this fashion they scale the straight trunk of the Araucaria with wonderful rapidity and skill. Once they have reached the top, they climb among the branches and shake them to make the cones fall.

252 The seeds [pinhões] are simply roasted in the fire, crushed in a mortar, and reduced to a mush which is used to prepare a broth cooked with water. With this paste they also make small cakes, round and flat, the size of a saucer, which are roasted on the embers. The seeds cannot be stored very long when fresh because they soon become infested with worms. To preserve them, the Indians place
251 the pinhões in special baskets, well sealed and previously lined with cactus leaves. These baskets are immersed in small streams at especially selected locations for a month and a half. This preserves the nuts, which retain their nutritive qualities for a long period of time. Obviously, they are all but appetizing when removed from the water; they exude a powerful and unpleasant odor and their taste is repulsive and intolerable to our stomach. The Indians, however, are not upset in the least by these new characteristics of the pinhões, which they still prize very highly. The broths and cakes described above are largely made from the preserved nut.

222 Wild honey also plays an important part in their diet, and they
262 cannot do without it. Their ability time and again to discover a bee nest in the midst of the forest, nearly always at the top of a high tree, could only be described as an instinct or an additional sense. Once the nest has been sighted, they scale the tree by means of the process described above, with cord and strap, which they use [once on top] to steady themselves against the tree. This leaves their arms free to wield the short-handled axe with remarkable sureness and skill. They split the wood exactly in the right place and make an opening in the shape of a perfect triangle. Every part of the bee nest is utilized: the chrysalids are eaten along with the honey and comb, and every bit of the wax is gathered for various purposes.

They do not merely eat the chrysalids of bees but also those of other insects such as wasps, hornets, etc., the nests of which they seek out eagerly.

262 Apparently the dearth of game in these southern woods forced the Indians to resort to every possible means of satisfying their hunger.